FEMALE FOETICIDE
PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Female Foetidice Problems and Solutions 7
Dr. Muhammad Raziul Islam Nadvi

Female Foeticide 15
Muhammad Zainul Abedin Mansoori

Stop Female Foeticide 21
Vidya Prakash

When Will Foeticide Stop 25
Muhammad Yusuf (Munna)

Some Spine-Chilling Facts 29

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In the name of Allah the most merciful and beneficent

INTRODUCTION

In our country, the saga of crime against and exploitation of women seems never ending. Female foeticide, dowry system, physical and mental torture, domestic violence, female trafficking etc. are only some of the examples; but even otherwise the list of exploitation is very long. Lives of women are made hell and unfortunately central and state governments together with the judiciary have failed in preventing this crime against women.

The Qur'an teaches that killing one innocent person is equal to killing the entire humanity and saving one life is equal to saving the entire humanity. Imagine! how cruel that society is where an unborn girl child is killed in the very womb of her mother? What is her sin? Her right to life is granted to her by her Creator, taking this right away is revolting against the Creator. Why is the woman who gives birth to a girl looked down upon with contempt and scorn when it is not she who decides whether a girl or a boy is growing in her womb, and it is not in her control to give birth to a boy or a girl?

Why is it that efforts such as laws and legislations, education, awareness campaign by various organizations and economic prosperity have failed to curb female foeticide? What is the lasting solution to this problem? Is it not the responsibility of the entire society to give it some hard thought and finds its solution? If this social, immoral and human sickness is

not prevented, the family system in the society will be disturbed. The balance of sex ratio will be disturbed and lead to imbalance which is against the law of nature. Will any society survive after doing so? Is it not true that in spite of all its developments and achievements it will be ruined and destroyed?

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind has been active in the country and has been working with its own rules, principles and methods to eradicate social evils and moral degeneration for the last 70 years and for this it has also been co-operating with other likeminded organizations. In the opinion of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind the main reason for female foeticide is the divergence of mankind from God's divinely revealed guidance and adopting their own ways. In addition to this, another important reason is the refusal to believe in life after death where one would be rewarded or punished as per his deeds.

We present to you this booklet "Female Foeticide-Problems and Solutions" and pray to God that he helps us to effectively address the problem through mutual co-operation.

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FEMALE FOETICIDE
PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

[Dr. Muhammad Raziul Islam Nadvi]

Female foeticide is a serious social problem and is the reason for the imbalance in sex ratio. The male population is growing faster but the female population is declining gradually. Consequently, the society has become vulnerable to many evils. It is a matter of serious concern to all intellectuals who are trying to control it in different ways.

Similarly many social organizations are also working according to their own capacities. At governmental level also several laws providing stringent punishments are enacted. Yet there is no sign of this problem coming to an end. The imbalance created by the interference of man in the Creators natural system of creation has forced mankind to helplessly face the consequences.

To begin the problem of increasing population was greatly exaggerated. Later to deal with this exaggerated problem various schemes of family planning were introduced. Laws were also passed for birth control. As the issue progressed efforts were made to identify the gender of the foetus, with the help of different technologies and if it is confirmed to be a female, it is aborted.

In India there is a census every ten years. In the years 2001 the population crossed 1,02,70,15,000 wherein male population was 53,12,77,000 and female

population was 49,57,38,000. Indicating that for 100 males there are 93 females. The gap between male and female population has widened during the current decade. *(Rastriya Sahara, 7 September, 2006)*

There is a wide difference in the ratio of males and females especially in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. In these states the population of female is 800-900 for every 1000 males. In the 1991 census there were only 875 females for every 1000 men. This in the year 2007 has declined to 793. Similarly in Maharashtra there were 948 females for every 1000 males in the year 1991; it has come down to 917 in the year 2001.

(Rastriya Sahara, 22 August, 2006)

In Jaisalmer, the border area of Rajasthan, the ratio is as low as 785 females to 1000 males.

(Rastriya Sahara, 9 September, 2006)

In Agra division in comparison to every 1000 males there are 887 females in Firozabad, 891 in Eta, 866 in Agra, 872 in Mathura, 886 in Hathras and 889 in Aligarh. *(Rastriya Sahara, 9 September, 2006)*

The tendency to get rid of female child is due to the low status accorded to women. They are considered inferior to male child. Their existence is considered a burden on parents on account of the expenditure in their upbringing, social security, education and marriage (dowry). In addition to this, there are many serious problems associated with their upbringing; hence consider it better to get rid of them prior to their birth.

Even at the advent of the last Prophet of Allah (s.a.w) girls were considered a burden. The thought of marrying off their daughter outside their tribe on not

finding a suitable groom in their own tribe constantly worried the parents. There was also the fear of their daughter being captured by the dacoits and being enslaved for life. These were the reasons why the parents would be crestfallen at the news of the birth of a girl child.

The Quran states this attitude of the parents in the following verse: "When any of them is told about the birth of a female, his face turns dark, and he is filled with suppressed anger, and he hides himself from people because of the bad news, thinking: should he keep the child despite disgrace, or should he bury it in dust? How evil is their estimate of Allah!" (Chapter 16 – 58:59)

There were quite a few cruel practices among the Arab tribes before the advent of Islam and this can be observed in the following quotes

- As the time of delivery drew closer, a grave used to be dug and if the girl child was born, immediately she used to be buried alive
- A new born girl child used to be killed and thrown before the dogs
- A new born girl child used to be thrown from the mountains

The situation today is no different. A report in "Rastriya Sahara" dated 9 September 2006, states that in a village Devada in Jaisalmer District in Rajasthan there has been not been single marriage of a girl in the last 100 years. This is because girl child was killed mercilessly after the birth, sometimes by their own mother by adding opium in the milk and at times sand

packs were kept on their nose or by stuffing sand in the infant's nose and mouth. And sometimes by gagging with pillow or filling their mouth with salt.

The section of the society which considers itself advanced and educated is so heartless that it does not wait for the birth of the child but examine the gender of the foetus through ultrasound and in case it happens to be a female they go ahead with abortion without any hesitation. In the year 1994 Natal Diagnostic Technique Regulation And Prevention of Misuse Act was passed to curb such practices. According to this law, it is illegal to find out the gender of the foetus. But in spite of this every year 5-6 lakh girls are killed in the womb of the mother itself. *(Rastriya Sahara 6 June 2006)*

Occasional raids are carried out on such fertility detection centers. Doctors involved in this crime are arrested and prosecuted and some are even punished. But despite these efforts, this social evil is not only far from coming to an end but curbing its abetment has also been not possible.

The Islamic Solutions:

Islam considers female foeticide a grave crime. It adopts various methods to prevent it. It does away with those doubts and apprehensions in the mind of the people which leads them to female foeticide. Islam considers girls to be a blessing and fortune to the parents. It educates them about their upbringing and better education. At social level this approach to check female foeticide was very effective. The first thing that Islam did was to prepare the mindset and change the attitude of the people of the whole society. No law or legislation can be effective until and unless people

themselves are ready to accept it and should be convinced about its benefits and ill-effects. Islam declared female foeticide as a barbaric and satanic act:-

"And, likewise, the beings supposed to have a share in Allah's Divinity have made the slaying of their offspring seem lawful to many of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity so that they may ruin them and confound them regarding their faith. If Allah had so willed, they would not have done that. Leave them alone to persist in their fabrication." (Chapter 6: 137)

"Those who slew their children out of folly and ignorance, and forbade the sustenance that Allah has provided them, falsely ascribing that to Allah, are utter losers; they have gone astray, and are certainly not among those guided to the Right Way." (Chapter 6 : 140)

Some Arab tribes used to kill their daughters because they considered girls to be economic burden and expected their sons to be of economic assistance. The Quran makes it very clear that Allah is the sole provider of livelihood. He alone is responsible for the sustenance of all living creatures, whether they are strong or weak, fit or disabled, earning or dependent.

The Quran states:

"Say to them, (O Muhammad): "Come, let me recite what your Lord has forbidden:

a) That you associate nothing with Him;

b) And do good to your parents;

c) And do not slay your children out of fear of poverty. We provide you and will likewise provide them with sustenance;

d) And do not even draw near to things shameful – be they open or secret;

e) And do not slay the soul sanctified by Allah except by way of justice and law; this He has enjoined upon you so that you may understand;" (Quran 6: 151)

The Quran further states and reassures: "Do not kill your children for the fear of want. We will provide for them and for you. Surely killing them is a great sin." (Quran 17: 31)

The holy Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) disapprove of female foeticide.

"And when the girl child buried alive shall be asked: for what offence was she killed?" (Quran 81: 8-9)

Hadith : "Allah has made it Haram (Unlawful) upon you to disobey parents and to bury the girl child alive and to squander wealth"

Pledge against Female foeticide

One of the clauses that the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) would insist on while taking a pledge from his followers was that one will not kill his children. After the treaty of Hudaibiya and before the victory of Makkah, many women migrated from Makkah to Medina, here Allah ordered his messenger to take a pledge from them.

"O Prophet, when believing women come to you and pledge to you that they will not associate aught with Allah in His Divinity, that they will not steal that they will not commit illicit sexual intercourse, that they will not kill their children, that they will not bring forth a calumny between their hands and feet, and that they will not disobey you in anything known to be good, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Surely Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Compassionate." (Quran 60: 12)

A similar pledge was also taken from the men. Ubaida-bin-Samit (RA) was one of the distinguished members of the delegation that took a pledge at the hands of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) and he states that the Prophet said: "Pledge with me that you shall worship none but Allah, not to steal, not to indulge in sex outside marriage, not to commit infanticide."

(Bukhari)

Islam does not believe the existence of girl to be a problem and burden for parents but rather a means to enter paradise. The ahadith are quoted by different companions of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w)

1.Hazrat ibn e Abbas (R.A) quotes the Prophet as saying, "Any Person who has two daughters and treats them well, they will be instrumental in his entry to paradise"

2.Hazrat Uqba bin Aamir (R.A) quotes the Prophet as saying: "If anybody has three daughters and caters to their needs according to his status; on the day of judgement, the daughters will protect him from entering the Hell."

In several statements of the Prophet (pbuh), he laid too much stress upon education of girls. In one hadith he says, "Anybody who has three daughters and three sisters and he looks after them properly, educates them, inculcates ethical values in them, arranges their marriages, and treats them well, he is entitled to heaven". One person present among the audience asked the Prophet (pbuh): "What if a person has only one daughter or only one sister and he treats them well, educates them, and arranges their marriage?" The Prophet replied, "He is also entitled to heaven."

The status of woman accorded in Islam is so high that one could not think of anything else. The societies in which women are deprived of their rights and treated inferior can surely be inspired by these teachings.

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FEMALE FOETICIDE

[Muhammmad Zainul Abedin Mansoori]

Like the West, Indian society is embroiled in gender exploitation, violence against women and the most heinous crime of foeticide. Among these female foeticide is the most saddening. What is surprising is inhumanity. Growing immorality and cruelty are the characteristics of the present society, which is known for its multi-religiosity, non-violence and spirituality and takes pride in being a nation that respects women's dignity and status.

Status of women has been the lowest throughout history. Although scientific and technological leading to civilisational evolution has changed the scenario to a great extent; however exploitation of women appears in its ugly form of female foeticide using the very modern tools of development viz. ultrasound technology. Sadly, it is spreading even among the affluent sections of the society.

For the last few years attempts are being made to mitigate the problem by sensitizing the people, creating awareness through publicity and making laws. But the pace of crime is much faster than the preventive measures. The feminist movement also expresses concerns but it accords greater enthusiasm, promptness and involvement in achieving the goals of night club culture, beauty contest culture, pub culture, valentine culture and other modernist and ultra- modernist liberty,

independence, development under the pretext of basic human rights than that which is shown to curb female foeticide.

At a national conference organized by a Muslim NGO a prominent personality and lady secretary of an NGO stated: "male-female ratio in our nation has gone from bad to worse from 1000:970 to as low as 1000:840. But it is seen that the male- female ratio among the Muslim community is much better than the national average, and so this community should come forth to guide and help the society to tackle this issue of female foeticide."

This issue of gender imbalance as expressed by the lady above is shared by most of the intellectuals and sociologists, but the other aspect of the lady's statement that the imbalance of gender in comparison to the Hindu community the Muslim community fares better, assumes significance. The reason for the better gender balance among the Muslim community can be understood through comparative study and analysis alone. Study says that daughter-in-laws are not burned in Muslim community, child marriage does not prevail, and girls in Muslim community do not commit suicide to rid the burden of dowry and the expenses of marriage from their parents. Moreover it's the right of the Muslim women to receive an amount as security (Mehar) from the bridegroom. In Muslim community unsatisfactory marriage can be sorted easily through divorce than scheming for murder and in addition to this the curse of female foeticide is close to absent in Muslim community.

The Muslim society is part and parcel of the Indian society. Centuries of interactions among the

communities and cultural exchange of rituals and traditions had its influence on the Muslim society too. This has led to appearance of some weakness and unhealthy traditions penetrated the Muslim community under the social influence of other communities and hence they failed to present true Islam to others. In spite of these influences the Muslim community comparatively fares better in term of gender ratio, this could only be because of the noble teachings of Islam through the Quran and the sayings of Prophet, Muhammad (SAW) which elevates the status of women.

1. Hazrat Ibn e Abbas (R.A) quotes the Prophet as saying, "Any Person who has two daughters and treats them well, they will be instrumental in his entry to paradise"

The advent of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula was in the midst of the uncivilised and uneducated people where immorality, characterlessness, violence, injustice, inequality, nudity, vulgarity and where women were looked down upon and killing of girl child was prevalent. The mission of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was not such a social reformation where only a particular aspect of human life is reformed and that too for a short period so that the vice would return later in the same society but rather his mission was a complete and permanent transformation of human life. This is the reason why the Prophet did not tackle the problem of human life individually or separately but started at the very root cause of human problems. From the Islamic viewpoint the main focus should be man himself and not the law and order or the administrative system. It means that man's consciousness, his soul, his nature, his

behaviour and belief, his thought, his mentality and psychology needs reformation.

Islam emphasizes the genuine and realistic bond between man and his Creator if this relationship with the Creator goes weak and improper, it leads to erosion of values. The first step that Islam took was imbibing the concept of oneness or unity of God and the concept of life after death or the hereafter, where one would be accountable for one's deeds, good or bad. On the bases of the strength of this belief man would be encouraged to do righteousness and piety and at the same time would work to eradicate vices and evils. It is the core of Islamic way of life.

To put an end to female foeticide the Prophet (pbuh) did not go about lecturing, organizing campaigns but rather exhorted the followers to educate them, arrange their marriages, look after their daughters and sisters with utmost care and warned them not to bury them alive.

The Prophet said, "Anybody who has three daughters and three sisters and he looks after them properly, educates them, inculcates ethical values in them, arranges their marriages, and treats them well, he is entitled to heaven."

Belief in the life hereafter had a magical effect on the people. Those who moaned at the news of the birth of a girl child were now elated that they have secured a means to achieve paradise. It thus resulted in the people to look upon the girl child not as a curse but rather a boon. Gradually it eradicated the practice of female foeticide among the followers of Prophet (SAW).

It is human nature that man's actions are based either upon hope of benefit or with fear and to avoid pain. Who else can know this nature of mankind of choosing what is right and wrong than his Creator? Keeping this in mind, God Almighty has warned mankind about female foeticide and this warning is very unique in the sense, it addresses not the criminal but the victims, in the following verse of the holy Quran which states, "And when the girl-child buried alive shall be asked: for what offence was she killed?" (Surah chapter 81- 8:9)

In this verse stern warning is given to those who practice female foeticide and assures harsh punishment to the perpetrators of this crime in the court of Allah. It is the miracle of the idea of the unity of God and the firm belief in life after death that the curse of female foeticide has been uprooted among the Muslim community. For over 1400 years this idea has been silently working in the Muslim community and even today the Muslim community is free and secure. It is the necessity of the situation that we introduce to the Indian society this enduring and effective alternate solution to female foeticide.

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STOP FEMALE FOETICIDE

[VIDYA PRAKASH]

In spite of all the campaigning against various exploitative evils against women like female foeticide, sati system, dowry, etc., they are still prevalent. In places of medieval methods of female foeticide we have modern methods such as ultrasound technique.

The danger posed by female foeticide is no less than the other forms of oppression of women. Earlier, the killing used to take place after birth, now the foetus is killed in the womb of the mother itself. Through modern ultrasound techniques it has become easy to identify the gender of the foetus and once identified the growing foetus in the womb is aborted very conveniently. The statistics can send shivers down the spine of any sensible person. All rules and regulations have failed rather miserably to deter female foeticide.

According to an estimate, every year one lakh women die in pregnancy related cases out of which 11% women die due to the complications in abortion. Such is the state of affairs that the practice of female foeticide has turned into a dangerous social and clinical problem. However, we do not have any means to know the number of women undergoing abortion and of those who do undergo, how many do of their personal choice or under family and social pressures, and it is also not possible to confirm the number of women who lose their lives during the process of abortion.

Despite of the financial and educational disparity and varying status in society the common causes of female foeticide is the want of a male heir; sons being viewed as financial and social security and the daughters as a burden.

The government is insensitive towards it and certainly will not spend sleepless nights in view of the rise or fall in the abortion figures. According to one report in India approximately between 5 lakh to 2 crore abortions take place annually. Besides among every 1000 pregnant women nearly 250-450 women undergo abortion for one reason or the other. "Family Medicine India," referring to a study and survey conducted by Romi Chabda and Noona Sheel in the year 1994 claimed that in the year 1992, 1 crore 10 lakh abortions took place out of which only 6.6 were legally registered.

One report states that since 1991 there has been no change in the rate of abortions. In 1991 total abortions in the registered clinics was 6,36,456 whereas in 1998-99 this figure reached at 6,66,882. It is believed that for every registered abortion, there are 12 unregistered abortions. The report of World Bank for the year 1996 states that every year 50 lakh illegal abortions take place in the modern health centres. According to ICMR's 1989 survey, there were 40 lakh unsafe abortions.

Easily available abortion techniques have made life of female foetuses more insecure. The strong desire to have a male heir is seen to be responsible for even religious and law-abiding women to go for illegal abortions even to the extent of placing their life in danger. Statistics tells us that in pursuit of a male child every year close to 40 lakh women jeopardize their life

by indulging in unsafe and illegal abortions. According to IMA, this number has crossed 50 lakh.

According to All India census department approximately 4-5 crore girl children are killed before birth. If government reports are to be believed, there are only 107 cases of female foeticides. How ridiculous are the official statistics!.

Generally the decision of abortion is not that of the woman, but rather the pressure of dowry, family and economy motivates them to commit this crime. The situation becomes grave when due to poverty women perpetrate female foeticide with the help of quacks which very often turn to be fatal.

The fast mushrooming of medical clinics and maternity homes are places in urban and rural areas where illegal abortions are committed secretly charging handsome fees. This cruel act of female foeticide cannot be prevented by mere legislation; it demands creating social awareness for which the women organizations should take proactive initiative. In addition to this it is the responsibility of the government to enforces the MTP act effectively so that all maternity homes and ultrasound machines be registered and those found violating this PNDT Act of 1994 are severely punished. Besides in accordance with the directions of Supreme Court a strict vigilance should be maintained over the functioning of these maternity homes and ultrasound clinics.

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WHEN WILL FOETICIDE STOP

[Muhammad Yusuf (Munna)]

In reality female foeticide is the murder of humanity. The pace at which this cruel crime is rising is also the pace of degeneration and stigmatizing of the society. This crime has not just denied the right to life but also the right to be born. Unfortunately we see that a quite a few doctors, who are saviours are involved in this hideous act of taking life before birth. What is more saddening is that women, the symbols of motherhood, are a part to this crime. Some social perversions shelter this heinous crime so much so that women are coerced and acquiesced to do female foeticide. Thus the community is equally responsible for this evil. As long as there exists in society a desire for male heir, discrimination between male and female child, population control, greed for wealth, religious obscurantism, etc., controlling female foeticide will be difficult. It is observed that practice of female foeticide outnumbers male foeticide.

Let us shed some light on the causes of female foeticide. Since the time of slogans for population control, the message of "small family – happy family" spread across the nation and to have 1 or 2 children became a norm; and as a consequence of all this female foeticide increased. One of the methods included to control population was foeticide. The slogan of population control ended up encouraging the people practicing foeticide. The practice of foeticide is ancient

in India. Even before the advent of ultrasound technology girl child were killed after the birth. Even today gender based killing goes on, only the reasons and methods have changed. Today the ratio of female foeticide is greater than male foeticide; the prevalent practice of dowry has also played its role in encouraging female foeticide. Apart from killing in the womb, killing for dowry by in-laws and suicide due to constant torture has increased alarmingly.

Female foeticide has led to imbalance in male-female ratio. In some states this imbalance has reached a critical level.

The growing discrimination between male-female has also led to the increase in the number of female foeticide. Male child is associated with social security, support in old age whereas a girl is looked upon as a liability, one who would be married and sent away and more so as a burden upon the family. It is because of the mentality of preference of male child to a girl child, news of "Human Child Sacrifice" with the desire to have a male child reaches us at regular intervals.

Increasing standard of living has also led to female foeticide. The fear of the cost incurred on the up-bringing of the girl child has also led to female foeticide. It has been embedded in the minds of poor families that more children are hurdles in economic progress. In fact this logic is unnatural and anti-social. If big families were reasons for poverty then India's prominent industrialists and businessmen should have been poor.

The increasing cases of female foeticide are symptoms of moral degeneration of the society. The present consumerist and materialistic culture is only adding fuel to the fire. The growing liberalism in the

society has rendered people shameless and insensitive. This free and consumerist society has promoted illicit relations and deviated people to beastly traits. In such case it is difficult to know the exact number of foeticide because of the veil of secrecy.

The doctors' role in female foeticide is very cruel as few have made this their profession. Clinics opening in every nook and corner of the country are vulnerable to such practices.

In the beginning of 1990's a private clinic in Jaipur started gender test using amniocentesis technique. It was accused by the local doctors that in this clinic, everyday 10 foetuses were killed. At that time they charged Rs. 1400 for gender test and Rs.1200 for each abortion. This business of killing foetus is rampant in New Delhi, the capital of India, along with Kanpur, Lucknow and other major cities in India. According to a report between the years 1978-83 there have been close to 78000 cases of female foeticide all over India. Another report states that annually 18560 female foeticide take place.

Since the advent of Sonography and ultrasound the practice of female foeticide has increased. Many a time doctors falsely state male foetus as female foetus to motivate abortion in the greed to earn more money. In order to curb female foeticide the government has banned gender identification in spite of which it still continues. Advancement in the field of medical Science has been abused for this act. In addition to the earlier practice of crushing the foetus, now a days a drug named Mcradel is injected wherein the foetus is automatically ejected. It is possible to identify the gender of the foetus through Ultrasound only when the

foetus is 3-4 months old; though doctors maintain that such gender identification test need not necessarily be 100% accurate.

In spite of adequate laws against female foeticide the practice is rampant. Earlier these cases were only dealt under IPC but now these cases are dealt under APT Act and each state has its own laws. In this regard the attitude of the government seems indifferent. Is population control the main idea behind this indifferent attitude? Or is it that the government desires that the population be controlled through foeticide?

It is obvious that there is a fault line in the system with regard to female foeticide. Whether this is realized or not, it is detrimental to the society. Foeticide is a well-known fact. In addition to this 25,000 women abort because of other reasons. It is obvious that the scale of population is getting one sided, as the greater number of people who practise female foeticide are those who try to avoid the burden of dowry. If this one-sided foeticide is not stopped then it may lead to an irrevocable social vacuum.

The government should not only pass the laws to check female foeticide, but should stem these social evils which encourage female foeticide. These social issues are dowry system, vulgarity, nudity, illegitimate relationships, desire for male heir, etc.

Social activists and intellectuals should come forward to curb obscurantist customs and rituals that encourage foeticide. Women should take up the cause because whether female foeticide will continue or stop depends on what they want and what they think.

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SOME SPINE-CHILLING FACTS

People present at a tea stall, at Kurukshetra bus stand, near Jyotisar complex were frozen and horrified at the sight which their eyes could not believe. They found a dog grasping in his jaws an infant girl child's corpse picked-up from the nearby garbage heap. Jyotisar is believed to be the preaching ground of Bhagwat Gita. When it was reported to police, DSP Kamaldeep carried a routine investigation indifferently.

According to Dainik Bhaskar (18 March, 2009. Hisar Edition) being born as a girl was the reason for her cruel killing. Where is the affection of the mother? Who robbed the girl child of her right to get love and affection from her mother? How could the parents be so heartless? How indifferent has the society become? The often-quoted statistic of female foeticide reflect the cruelty of the society. The paternal responsibility of some fathers is questionable. In spite of the declining female population coming to the notice of media, political leadership and social reformers, there seems to be no reaction, response or discussion on the issue; it appears all have turned blind, dumb and deaf to the issue. It seems that human problems do not concern them but irrelevant issues do influence them. They are inimical to fellow human being.

Available statistic reveal that in the states of Punjab and Haryana the practice of female foeticide are the highest in the nation. As a result of this the number of

females in comparison to males has reduced to alarming proportions. The birth of a live girl child in a village of Haryana last year, after many decades, was a news item. This is a village were never a girl child was allowed to live. Villagers believed having a girl child was against their dignity and having a son-in-law was dishonourable. The condition of Arabs before the advent of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) resembled similar conditions as in present day India. Islam changed this situation dramatically and gave the girl child the right to dignified life and bestowed on her deserving status in society. The teachings of Islam bestow upon the women exemplary respect and status.

The Holy Quran is a message and guidance from the creator of mankind. The 81st chapter of the Holy Quran narrates the scene of the Day of Judgment where man would be questioned about his deeds and one of the questions would be and when the girl-child buried alive shall be asked for what offence was she killed?" (Quran 81: 8-9) The Holy Prophet has affirmed: "The man, who took care of three daughters or three sisters, educated them and teaches them good manners and behaves kindly towards them till they become independent of his care by the will of Allah, is entitled by Allah to enter Paradise."